
አፍሪካ ከቀኝ ግዛት ወደ ነፃነት (1945-1980) ተስፋዎችና ውጤቶች፣ በደቻላ አበበ (ዶ/ር)፣ አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ፕረስ፣ 2016 ዓ.ም፣ ገፅ 352። *Africa from Colonialism to Independence (1945-1980): Expectations and Results*, by Dechasa Abebe, Addis Ababa University Press, 2016 E.C., pp. 352.

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This book focuses on the expectations and outcomes of political independence as it examines Africa's journey from colonialism to liberation between 1945 and 1980. It is written in Amharic language, in a rare way, definitely provides a wider Ethiopian readership with useful insights about the second half of the twentieth century history of Africa. Given Amharic literature's dearth of attention to African issues and African context, it would be wise for Ethiopian writers to take a cue from the author.

The book is broken up into ten chapters, with an introduction, a conclusion, and a list of recommended reference books for additional study. The author follows the long established procedures and mechanisms of historical writing. He has organized the major events and developments of African history mainly chronologically and thematically in the way enhances his arguments. Therefore, the book is systematically well-organized and presented. The structure is coherent and flows logically from chapter to chapter.

The book begins with an overview of African historiography. It assesses the strengths and weaknesses of expatriate and African historians' perspectives on studying African history. This section of the book discusses the stark contrasts between the Afrocentric and Eurocentric perspectives on the Africa's past. Afrocentric viewpoint proponents stress that prior to the colonial era, Africa had a distinct political, economic, and social history. On the other hand, the book's author takes issue with those who support the Afrocentric viewpoint, arguing that they fail to acknowledge Africa's technological backwardness at the time of European colonial conquest. Additionally, he faults the Afrocentric perspective for ignoring the role played by Africans in the slave trade and their collaboration with Europeans in the colonial conquest of Africa. In a nut shell, Afrocentric historians tend to avoid confronting the contentious issues as well as bloody conflicts among Africans, which are typically a dark aspect of the continent's past. Rather, they are occupied with charging Europeans for tarnishing Africa's golden age.

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On the other hand, the idea that Africa and Africans were endowed with history was largely rejected by the Eurocentric perspective. With no exaggeration, proponents of the Eurocentric perspective argue that history is essentially the study of man but the Africans, in the pre-colonial period, didn't qualify this. They spread a bizarre theory that classified Africans as "sub-humans" and kept them outside of the human family. Therefore, there is little doubt that historiography used to serve as a means of defending the legitimacy of White European colonial conquest and exploitation of Africans.

The book narrates the internal and external factors that contributed to Africans' liberation from colonialism. In particular, it provides a thorough examination of the liberation struggles and the true roles played by African elites and leaders. It also criticizes African leaders who, after independence, used the media and the new education system to greatly exaggerate their contributions to the liberation struggle and their heroism. The author states quite bluntly that the African leaders, who rallied and led their people for the liberation struggle with relative ease, faced difficulties when they tried to govern the newly independent nations. He attributed the incapacity of African leaders to effectively govern the newly independent nations and carry out the promises they made during the liberation struggle to a variety of reasons, including incompetence, lack of commitment, lack of experience, selfishness, tribalism, and corruption. Unfortunately, however, for more than half a century, African leaders, intellectuals, and elites have persisted in denouncing colonialism and attributing all of their own shortcomings to it. As the author correctly points out, Asian and Latin American nations were also colonized; however, unlike African leaders and elites, their leader and elites have charted their own paths to get out of economic poverty rather than blaming colonialism.

The African education system following independence as well as the benefits and drawbacks of using European languages as medium of instructions are other issues which have received enough attention in the book. With the aim of obtaining political legitimacy, the heroic struggle of African leaders to drive colonialists off their continent was overemphasized in the post-independence education system. Students in Africa were indoctrinated and preached to the point where they were unable to distinguish between a leader and their nation. African Leaders were portrayed as omniscient. The notion that the country would implode without the leader was ingrained in the minds of the populace. The author indicates that although the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was seen as a success by many African writers, it was no more than a forum where African leaders came together every year and

made long speeches and bragged that they were determined to end colonialism and neo-colonialism. In reality, however, African leaders lacked unity. It was a period when Anglophone and Francophone Africans were vying for supremacy. African leaders were also conspiring and destabilizing against each other involving in the Cold War bipolar politics. Moreover, the African Arab countries were more in favor of the Arab League than the OAU.

The book concludes its examination of Africa's contemporary history with a reminder of the direction that African historical research should take going forward. It has underlined that Africa's historical research should analyze the challenges of the continent with courage, appropriately and honestly, and should give a solution or suggest a path out of the quandary the continent is in. In contrast to the depressing narrative that Africans have lost everything their ancestors held and holding Europeans accountable for all of the African problems and denouncing them; a thorough investigation into the historical question of how Africa became underdeveloped, as compared to Europe, would help to impart more knowledge to the current generation of Africans. Moreover, the book calls for the detoxification and decolonization of African minds, as well as a return to the self and an emphasis on a narrative that will transform the continent for the better.

On the whole, this book is helpful for academics and students, especially for those who want to comprehend the contemporary history of Africa in Amharic. The ideas and information in this book were gathered from a variety of sources, most of which are difficult to obtain for readers who only understand Amharic. Therefore, the author deserves great recognition for his masterful synthesis, critical evaluation of such ideas and information, and the time and effort he put into writing this book.

To conclude this review, I would like to point out a few limitations that should be taken into account when the book is reprinted. First, the book's language is excellent and up to the standard, but there are a few spelling and grammar errors, so I suggest that it would be best if a literary specialist proofread the document once. Second, the wide spread background takes up the first 99 pages of the book; the author ought to condense this section. Third, the author should note that, as opposed to 1945–1980, the years 1945–1960 are usually regarded as a transitional period in African modern history. Last but not least, I want to draw the author's attention to the fact that Ethiopia and its leaders made a significant contribution to both the founding of the OAU and the political independence of Africa, a point that is not highlighted as much as it deserves in the book.